

Maria Pevnaya<sup>1</sup>, Mariana Cernicova-Buca<sup>2</sup>

# Corporate volunteering in the large enterprises' social mission – the case of a post-Soviet Russian industrial region

**ABSTRACT:** *The paper focuses on the main features of corporate volunteering in companies from the Sverdlovsk region (Russian Federation), with a population surpassing 4.5 million inhabitants. Corporate volunteering is analyzed in the context of the trend characteristic for the post-Soviet space. The article systematizes approaches to the definition and study of this phenomenon, implemented by researchers from different countries. The main goal of the article is to identify the specific features of corporate volunteering in a large Russian region, considered typical for industrial territories in post-Soviet areas, seen through the social value that local communities attribute to corporate volunteering. The paper is based on the results of a public opinion poll and structured interviews, carried out in the Sverdlovsk region, where there is a concentration of enterprises of “hard” industries. The responses obtained in the poll were further subjected to analysis using statistical methods. The data are supplemented with information collected through the qualitative interviews. Interviewed experts are the top managers of enterprises and the deputy directors for HR, GR, or social issues. The study shows that in Russian industrial cities, where large enterprises are the main employers for most residents, many questions on the implementation of social policy fall under the responsibility of these enterprises, and not of the local government. Researchers argue that corporate volunteering is not widespread in the large Russian regions. It most often develops within the framework of event planning and environmental projects, managed by enterprises in cooperation with social and cultural institutions of local communities and not with the non-profit sector. The traditions of the organization of mass social work formed during the socialist period are still deeply rooted in enterprises, and managers rarely identify volunteering as a new managerial tool, thus being untangled from the global trend of promoting corporate volunteerism as a means of building corporate culture.*

**KEYWORDS:** social policy, corporate volunteering, social participation, social projects, social responsibility of corporations (CSR)

**RECEIVED** 6 August 2019; **ACCEPTED** 18 January 2020.

## INTRODUCTION

Volunteering is a social phenomenon that enjoys a vibrant development. Having shifted from self-organized initiatives of citizens to organized activities, volunteering work became a matter of interest for the biggest players in international politics. At the end of 2012, the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution on integrating volunteering in the next decade (UN Resolution, 2013). It outlines the range of problems that the international community can address through the volunteer movement as a strategic tool: overcoming social exclusion and discrimination, empowering youth, dealing with climate change, disaster risk reduction, and so on. One of the provisions of this UN Resolution directly concerns the need to expand corporate volunteering and volunteer activities to the private sector. In a follow-up document, it is recognized that an increasing number of global businesses see volunteering as a core component of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (State of the World's Volunteerism Report, UN, 2018).

Despite the convergence of the vectors of development of all types of volunteering, including corporate volunteerism in different countries (Smith et al., 2016), one should be aware of the cross-cultural distinctiveness of discourses that pertains to corporate volunteering from an employee and corporate management perspectives (Stumberger & Pauly, 2018). Cultural traditions, globalization, and the socioeconomic background influence the type of activities and the perceptions of the volunteers regarding their

<sup>1</sup> Maria Pevnaya: Ural Federal University, Yekaterinburg, Russia, e-mail: m.v.pevnaya@urfu.ru

<sup>2</sup> Mariana Cernicova-Buca: Politehnica University Timisoara, Romania, email: mariana.cernicova@upt.ro

role and impact in society. Researchers emphasize that volunteerism in Western democracies differs from the one in countries with state socialism (Khvorostianov & Remennick, 2017; Voicu & Voicu, 2009) or in former European socialist countries. Field analysis of the state of volunteer works shows that corporate volunteering practice in post-communist countries such as Romania, Slovakia, and Russia, although enjoying a growing trend, is not as prevalent as in other countries of the world (Lescova, 2017; Păceșilă, 2017).

However, studies of post-Soviet patterns of management, including volunteerism in the activities of big companies—employers and their adaptation to measures that respond to the democratization of society and to the development of market economy are insufficient. This article highlights perceptions on corporate volunteering shared by the organizers of corporate programs in enterprises from the larger Sverdlovsk region.

The research aims at deepening the knowledge regarding corporate volunteering in Russia as a mark of implementation of the social mission of regional enterprises, successfully operating in market conditions. The research focuses on the motivations, values, perceptions of the people engaged in corporate volunteering, and on clarifying whether this type of volunteering is internalized as a new trend or seen as a continuation of a familiar pattern of organizing public life.

Thus, the main goal of the article is to identify the specific features of corporate volunteering in a large Russian region, considered typical for industrial territories in post-Soviet areas, seen through the social value that local communities attribute to corporate volunteering.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature shows that there is considerable evidence to connect volunteerism and the social well-being of people (Appau & Churchill, 2018; Peggy & Hewitt, 2001), even though people from different regions engage in different areas of volunteering (Salamon, 2017; Smith, 2014). A good amount of research is devoted to unveiling the antecedents of volunteerism (Hustinx et al., 2010; Musick & Wilson, 2008; Wilson, 2012), namely, subjective dispositions (Erasmus & Morey, 2016; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998), the individual “assets” that enable people to volunteer or their interest in engaging in volunteer work (Runte & Basil, 2011), as well as the social context which is influenced by people’s behavior.

In the latter case, researchers focus on the growing intervention of governments in volunteering (Waele & Hustinx, 2018), the inclusion of volunteerism as a social movement in the development of civil society and local communities (Einolf, 2018), the inclusion of corporate volunteering in the development of non-profit organizations (Roza et al., 2017), and the development of volunteer management (Einolf, 2018a). Researchers convincingly prove the interdependence between volunteerism and the development of social capital (Wilson, 2012) and the impact of volunteering on skills development, self-esteem, and professional development.

Researchers also argue that corporate volunteering has a positive impact on a variety of important corporate aspects of life such as human resource management, promoting the company image and showing proof of CSR (Licandro, 2017; Obrad & Gherhes, 2018). The active involvement in civic matters and volunteerism has a positive impact on the employees’ work attitudes and morale, increases loyalty toward the company, the commitment, and the overall job satisfaction (Gatignon & Mignonac, 2015; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017; Sekar & Dyaram, 2017).

There are studies that discuss the relationship between corporate volunteering and civic engagement outside the workplace in Russia. First, trust in companies can be converted into increased trust in social institutions. Second, corporate volunteering can expose employees to other realities, thereby leading them to rethink their priorities. Third, corporate volunteering socializes employees to volunteering, thus making them more likely to incorporate volunteering into their personal repertoires of activities. Corporate volunteering appears to be an effective mechanism for stimulating civic engagement and volunteering infrastructure in post-communist countries (Krasnopolskaya et al., 2015).

Volunteerism is important for creating social capital and civil society, and therefore, it has become a fundamental part of social policies across most Western countries. The local community sees positive impacts of corporate volunteering on reducing poverty, strengthening social cohesion, solving community problems, enhancing civic-mindedness and interaction in the community, and so on (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Păceșilă, 2017). The business community realizes that volunteering facilitates employee participation and commitment, while also strengthening communities and the relationship between businesses and communities (Grandi et al., 2018).

We can assume that when companies interact with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and local authorities to shape their CSR strategies, these strategies are influenced by the socioeconomic environment and by the cultural patterns of the region where they operate. This environment contains the culture, historical heritage, and political status of the region or country. In analyzing the data, it is important to not only search for statistical evidence, but also to evaluate formal institutional norms such as laws, political and official conventions, rules of conduct, and mental patterns of people. Every institutional setting is the place where collective interests are formed and promoted and formal and informal practices are developed (Doh & Guay, 2004).

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING IN RUSSIA

The discussion on the theoretical definition of corporate volunteering is relatively less prominently tackled with in scientific literature than other aspects of corporate practices. Sociologists in different countries define corporate volunteering as being employment based. Under this umbrella falls any formally organized support that a company provides to employees wishing to volunteer their time and skills to serve the local, domestic, or international community without any additional compensation or remuneration (Krasnopolskaya et al., 2015). Such a definition, however, does not reflect to a significant extent the variety of practices. For instance, the Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose (CECP) developed quite a famous Corporate Giving Standard listing among the most successful volunteering program initiatives like “Company-Wide Day of Service”, “Dollars for Doers”, and “Paid-Release Time”. Employees of such corporations can serve as volunteers during worktime, without diminishing their work pay, and having the choice of participating in such activities or not (CECP, 2017).

Boštjančič et al. analyzed different views on defining corporate volunteering. They offer a behavioral definition to corporate volunteering as “giving time or skills during a planned activity for a volunteer group or organization” (Boštjančič et al., 2018).

In “An Integrated Employee Volunteering Framework” developed by Rodell et al. (2015), corporate volunteering is defined as being initiated by a company. The researchers single out both the antecedents and the consequences of volunteering. A variety of factors influence employees’ decisions to volunteer. Some of these factors can be found in research on volunteering in general, such as demographic characteristics and personality traits. Other factors are specific for the employment context, structures, and policies regarding volunteering (Rodell et al., 2016). Some theorists consider two basic motivations for volunteering: to satisfy self-oriented or instrumental interests and to satisfy other-oriented or altruistic interests (Ghose & Kassam, 2014). With the altruistic orientation, such as a prosocial personality, the common driver of volunteering seems to be the desire to increase others’ well-being. (Brockner et al., 2014; Rodell et al., 2016). Less attention was given to the citizenship behavior, the content of the volunteering activities, and the impact of corporate volunteers on society.

In Russian companies, corporate volunteering is understood both as direct involvement of employees as volunteers, the case in which employees offer personal assistance to those in need, and as indirect participation – the collection of monetary and material resources. Corporate volunteering is perceived as a self-evident practice, the content of which does not need explanations (Corporate volunteering in Russia, 2016). Researchers propose to distinguish between “traditional volunteering” as “additional hands” and volunteerism based on “professional experience, knowledge, and skills”, which is sometimes also called “professional support” (Mirvis et al., 2014; Pro bono: Russian practice and vector of development, 2017). In Russia, pro bono services in their modern sense appeared several years ago, but non-profit organizations and individuals receiving such assistance are still singular (Pro bono: Russian practice and vector of development, 2017). In Russia, as a rule, only large corporations oriented toward the foreign market or Russian representations of transnational corporations officially announce programs of corporate volunteering within the framework of strategic charity and CSR. In 2017, 160 companies were represented at the Moscow International Forum “Corporate Volunteering”.

We agree with Gorlova (2016) that in the Russian context, corporate volunteerism should be understood as the voluntary activity of employees who decide freely to spend time and put their skills to serve the local community, under the initiative or with the support of the organization, and having social value to the local community. Through these lenses, we interpreted the results of the opinion poll and further used the responses to investigate the perceptions on corporate volunteerism in Middle Urals, a typical Russian industrial region.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Data and methods

The research strategy is based on a research-mixed method. According to the methodology developed by *Creswell*, an explanatory sequential design was applied (*Creswell, 2014*). First, we used such methods as a mass survey and an expert quantitative survey to explore the corporate volunteers' profile, their motivation, the content and conditions of their activities, and the formal or informal nature of the volunteering engagement. Second, we used qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews to explain corporate volunteering in more detail. This design allows comparisons between the perceptions of the stakeholders regarding the areas of corporate volunteering, the content and themes of projects, and the social value of corporate volunteering programs.

Our research aims at finding evidence to respond to the following questions: What is the profile of a corporate volunteer in the post-Soviet industrial territory? What are the motives for engaging in such activities? What is the content of corporate volunteering projects? What is the socioeconomic and cultural environment in which such projects are applied?

Our study relies on the acquisitions of research approaches and methodological solutions already developed under this topic in Russia. We used the scales of motives and different types of social engagement or prosocial behavior which were constructed by the "Public Opinion Foundation" (*Volunteerism...*, 2012) and the Centre for Studies of Civil Society and Non-profit Sector (CSCSNS), as presented in "Monitoring the Status of Civil Society in Russia" (*Mersiyanova & Yakobson, 2007*).

The results of the public opinion poll in Sverdlovsk region facilitated access to information regarding the individual "assets" that enable people to volunteer or stir their interest in corporate volunteerism, their motivation, and the specific nature of their volunteer work as corporate volunteering and civic engagement. Further, we refined the results with the help of a structured expert interview, to identify the characteristics of social contexts that influence people's behavior and volunteering activity.

The first empirical study was the survey of residents of the Sverdlovsk region ( $N = 600$ , sample type – randomly stratified, error not more than 3.5%, 2017). The sample population model is based on official statistics and reflects the following criteria for the general population of the region: age, gender, residency. At the first stage, residents of three types of settlements were randomly surveyed: megacities and large cities with a population of more than 100,000 people (56%), medium-sized cities with a population of 50,000 up to 100,000 people (16%), and small towns and settlements with a population of less than 50,000 people (28%).

At the second stage, the sample was adjusted in accordance with the gender and age structure of the population of megacities, medium cities, and small cities in the region. The socio-demographic characteristics of the survey participants represent the population of the Sverdlovsk region over 18 years of age. The sample included 27% of urban residents aged 18–30, 40% of respondents aged from 31 to 45 years, and 33% aged from 46 to 65 years.

The questionnaire asked the respondents to choose from 15 practices and point to those in which they were involved in the last year. These alternatives were coded in dichotomous variables and reflect different types of social engagement or prosocial behavior – the experience of social, environmental, cultural, educational, information volunteering, assistance in emergency situations and the search for missing people, participation in the activities of NGOs and social institutions of the city, online volunteering, and so on.

Other questions in the questionnaire looked for information such as: "If you did something in the last year for somebody outside your household/family, please indicate how often you did it". The alternatives "alone" or "together with friends, relatives, or acquaintances" make it possible to identify informal (spontaneous self-organization) volunteer participation of respondents. The alternatives "through NGOs" and "institutions of culture, healthcare, education" characterize the formal (organized) participation of respondents. We combined the alternatives and built a secondary dichotomous variable "type of volunteering".

To identify a group of citizens with experience of corporate volunteering, we focused on the definition of corporate volunteering as prosocial behavior implemented in the organization where people work. Respondents were asked a dichotomous question: "Did you do unpaid work for somebody outside your household/family by your own decision – helped people, participated in various projects and actions organized in the place of your work during the year?"

To study the volunteers' motivation, we asked the question: "What does participation in volunteer activity give you?" A respondent could choose no more than three motives, which, in his/her opinion, are the most important. All the motives of voluntary activity were proposed: work experience; professional career perspectives; interesting job; useful acquaintances; access to the necessary information; experience of social and political activity; new knowledge and qualification; acquaintanceship with influential people; respect of people around; friends; favorite occupation, hobby; communication with interesting people; opportunity to protect the

rights, to solve personal problems; to provide promotion to the ideas; opportunity to raise self-assessment; opportunity to improve life in your city, district, street; and opportunity to help people.

The sample was verified; all missing values were minor and not systematic. The number of responses was quite adequate for testing our hypotheses. All analyses were performed in SPSS.

The second part of the study consisted of experts' survey. The experts were top managers, deputy heads of large regional enterprises responsible for social issues, human resources (HR) or government relations (GR) (N = 124, 2017). Experts represented at least 90% of enterprises forming the labor market in the region and are the main employers for 93% of urban residents in 94 cities of the Sverdlovsk region. The selection of experts was carried out in five administrative districts of the region and in the city of Yekaterinburg as an independent management unit. The type of territorial formation is a relevant parameter; thus, the selection of experts was made to represent large, medium, and small cities.

Also, 89% of the experts are heads of industrial enterprises, representatives of the production sector, which is due to the economic and natural specifics of the region. Eleven percent of the experts represent organizations of the social sphere, since in one administrative district, industrial production is minimally located.

The short expert questionnaire included closed and open questions. Experts were asked to respond to the closed question: "Does your organization (at the enterprise) have social projects involving employees in their leisure time and without compulsion – corporate volunteering?"

Those who offered a positive response were further asked to single out the main areas of corporate volunteering in their organizations/employers by content, theme, and scope. To follow-up, they were asked to exemplify corporate volunteering activities: "What was, in your opinion, the most successful, interesting, and prominent social project which involved your co-workers as corporate volunteers?"

The questionnaire also included an open question: "What do you think can encourage the development of corporate volunteering and social projects in your company?"

The questionnaire was printed out, distributed to experts, and completed in a hard copy form. Data were introduced and processed with SPSS program. The statistical representation is helpful only for closed questions. Open questions, inviting for comments and descriptions, need a qualitative approach. For this purpose, 24 experts were interviewed for theme development, to discuss the availability of corporate volunteering projects at their enterprises, to clarify their position, and to formulate more specific and detailed answers.

The qualitative interviews were recorded, and responses were transcribed verbatim. The limitations of the qualitative study are due to time constraints, because our experts did not have enough free time for responding. We mainly focused on the coding clusters:

1. the content of volunteer projects and activities;
2. the scenarios used for corporate volunteering programs;
3. partnerships; and
4. typical problems occurring in the process of organizing social activities and projects which involve co-workers as volunteers in companies based in large industrial regions.

The designs of our mass survey and of the expert interviews were based on the hypotheses formulated as follows:

- H1. The experience of corporate volunteering is inherent in the inhabitants of the region, which have certain socio-demographic characteristics.
- H2. The experience of corporate volunteering is caused by the organization of important social events in the respondents' residence area.
- H3. The experience of corporate volunteering is caused by institutionalized activities in the social sphere of the territory of residence.

### Socioeconomic characteristics of the region – Sverdlovsk region

Nearly 2,000 settlements are located on the territory of the Sverdlovsk region, out of which 47 are cities and 26 are urban-type settlements, with a population surpassing 4.5 million inhabitants. Local self-government is present in 94 municipalities – large, medium, and small cities. As of January 2018, in the Sverdlovsk region, 151,480 organizations had been registered; out of these, 137,672 are private organizations, 7,485 are state or municipal property organizations, and the rest have a mixed form of ownership



(Federal state statistics service of the Sverdlovsk region, 2018). In the economic activity, as of February 2018, 1,572,665 people are employed. The main employment is provided by enterprises of manufacturing industry and engineering, trade, education, health, and social services. Socioeconomic characteristics of the region determine the specific employment of the population of the Sverdlovsk region, which mainly lives in cities and works either in large industrial enterprises or in the social sphere of these cities. In most urban areas of the Sverdlovsk region, the third sector is not very well developed. According to official statistics, there are more than 6,000 NGOs registered in the region; yet, research shows that less than 20% of the NGOs are socially oriented. The majority of these operate in the regional capital, Yekaterinburg.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND THE MAIN FINDINGS

According to our survey, in the Sverdlovsk region, in the last year, only 10% of respondents declared having experiences with corporate volunteering. In this group, 70% was represented by women and only 30% were men. Among the inhabitants of the region with this experience, 33% were young people in the age group 18–30, 38% were in the age group 31–45, and 22% were aged over 46. The polled group spread as follows: 25% were residents of small towns, 32% of medium-sized cities, and 43% of megacities in the Sverdlovsk region.

To test the first hypothesis, the relationship of the dichotomous variable “experience of corporate volunteering” with the variables “gender”, “higher education”, “income level”, and “type of city” (see Table 1) was analyzed.

The experience of corporate volunteering was 12% among women and only 5% among men. Statistical differences between the variables “gender” and “experience of corporate volunteering” were significant and the correlation was weak and positive. There is a small probability that women’s experience of corporate volunteering is more likely to be explained by the fact that women generally tend to get involved in all kinds of prosocial behavior, including volunteer activity in its various forms. In the group of respondents with higher education, 11% had experience of corporate volunteering. In the group of respondents without higher education, only 5% participated in corporate volunteering. The likelihood that people with higher education participate in corporate volunteering is higher than for people without higher education. The statistical differences between the variables “gender” and “higher education” were significant, but the correlation was weak.

The correctness of the chi-square test in assessing the mutual dependence of the variables “experience of volunteering” with “income level” and “type of city” was determined by the fact that the expected frequencies  $<5$  occur in no more than 20% of the table fields, and the sums for rows and columns are bigger than zero. Pearson chi-square test results show the absence of any connection between the experience of corporate volunteering and the level of income of respondents. The study proves that the experience of corporate volunteering does not correlate with the size of the city in which the respondents live.

To test the second hypothesis, that is, the experience of corporate volunteering is caused by the organization of important social events in the respondents’ living areas, by correlation analysis, we estimated the relationship between the variable “experience of corporate volunteering” and other types of social engagement or prosocial behavior that the respondents implemented in the current year. The estimation of the measure of connectedness of variables with dichotomous scales was carried out through an analysis of the Fisher criterion. Significant correlations were found only in four variables characterizing the types of prosocial behavior that can be correlated with event and environmental volunteering (see Table 2).

Eighty-six percent of respondents declared they helped to organize holidays, educational and sports events, mass charitable events, concerts, film screenings, and so on. Participation in environmental activities occupied the second place in prevalence among residents with experience of corporate volunteering. Forty percent of respondents who had experience in participating in employment-based projects signalled that they took part in environmental events, subbotniks (a term indicating the voluntary work as a civic duty in Soviet times), and improvement and cleaning of the territory of their residence.

The second hypothesis is supported by an analysis of the leading motives of prosocial behavior of the residents of the Sverdlovsk region, who have experience in corporate volunteering. Of the 17 motives proposed in the questionnaire, only 2 had a significant correlation with the experience of corporate volunteering – “communication with interesting people” (Fisher coefficient 0.264,  $p$ -value -, 000) and “the opportunity to improve life in your city, district, street” (Fisher coefficient 0.375,  $p$ -value -, 000). These motivations for people with experience of corporate volunteering are more important than selfish agendas or career goals, as well as altruistic motives.

**Tab. 1:** Symmetric measures regarding the experience of corporate volunteering and socio-demographic characteristics of the inhabitants of the Sverdlovsk region

Pearson chi-square			
	Value	df	Asymp. sig. (2-sided)
Experience of corporate volunteering and age	1.626	2	0.444
Experience of corporate volunteering and income	6.160	5	0.291
Experience of corporate volunteering and type of the city	3.743	2	0.154
Phi correlation			
	Value	Approx. sig.	
Experience of corporate volunteering and gender	0.159	0.01	
Experience of corporate volunteering and higher education	0.221	0.004	

Source: Authors, 2018.

**Tab. 2:** Correlation of the experience of corporate volunteering and other types of prosocial behavior in the Sverdlovsk region (Phi correlation test)

	Value	Approx. sig.
Experience of corporate volunteering and assistance in organizing mass sports events	0.220	0.000
Experience of corporate volunteerism in the provision of educational activities	0.160	0.000
Experience of corporate volunteering in the organization of concerts, exhibitions, performances	0.380	0.000
Experience of corporate volunteering and participation in environmental projects, subbotniks, and improvement and cleaning of the territory of your village	0.218	0.01

Source: Authors, 2018.

According to the survey of experts, 65% of enterprises that provide employment for the main labor market in the region implement projects of corporate volunteering. Every fourth expert stated that there are no such projects at their enterprises. Eleven percent were at a loss to answer the question whether corporate volunteering is present in their organizations or not.

The evaluation of “content of volunteering projects and actions” helped highlight some of the most salient areas of corporate volunteering that experts identified and/or described. The first place was occupied by environmental actions, landscaping, and large-scale subbotniks, which are organized everywhere in certain periods throughout the country. Sixty percent of experts identified such activities. The second place in the list, with 55% responses, was occupied by cultural and mass events. These are traditionally organized in various municipalities, municipal districts, and/or organized by local self-government bodies with the active involvement of the main employers in the territories. Thirty percent of experts recalled and discussed social actions supporting socially vulnerable groups of the population: social orphans, pensioners, veterans of the Second World War. The fourth most common type of volunteer work dealt with information and educational volunteering, which included projects aimed at raising the awareness of the population, mainly the youth, about the activities of specific enterprises in the cities where they lived and studied. The topic of professional orientation was voiced by 15% of experts.

To test the third hypothesis regarding the relationship between the experience of corporate volunteering and institutionalized activities in the social sphere of the residence area, we analyzed the correlation between the variables “experience of corporate volunteering” and “type of volunteering”. We analyzed the answers of 70% of respondents who noted in the question menu some sort of prosocial behavior. This made it possible to identify the type of prosocial behavior – volunteerism based on self-organization or volunteer participation, initiated and followed by an organization. On an informal basis, 50% of the region’s residents assisted the needy with the experience of corporate volunteering. Among those respondents who implemented various types of prosocial behavior, but were not involved in corporate volunteering, 70% of the region’s inhabitants aided other people on an informal basis. The connection between the variables “experience of volunteering” and “type of volunteering” was significant, but weak (Fisher

coefficient 0.272,  $p$ -value -, 007). Thus, we can conclude that for involvement in corporate volunteering in comparison with other types of prosocial behavior, an organized external environment is more likely to take place.

According to our expert survey, almost every third project (30%) is initiated by the employees themselves at those enterprises where corporate volunteering projects are implemented. In 70% of cases, such work is organized centrally, at the initiative of the management, when employees are involved in corporate social projects and actions related to the activity of local governments and the activities of social, cultural, and educational institutions operating in cities.

The qualitative analysis of the interview regarding the item “partnerships” showed that the recurrent partners of corporations in organizing social projects pertaining to corporate volunteering are municipal public servants, employees of state social, educational, and cultural institutions. In the region where the research was conducted, it is very rare, next to null the practice of organizing projects in which corporate volunteers interact with socially oriented NGOs.

In the Middle Urals, corporations use two types of scenarios for corporate volunteering: offering support to employees as volunteers and planning volunteerism initiated by the company. “The company’s planned volunteering” is typical only for one large industrial enterprise in the region, which is part of an industrial holding, whose products are oriented to the international market. In this scenario, the organizers identify and mark voluntary work as corporate volunteering. Despite the well-developed corporate policy of this holding, the organizers of this direction have little or no understanding that these projects are the result of strategic CSR planning. “Support employees as volunteers” includes the recruitment of employees to take part in independent activities, which are, however, organized regularly. In this scenario, the organizers themselves do not identify such activities as instances of corporate volunteering and do not report them in this category.

Our survey showed that in today’s Sverdlovsk region, which is one of the developed regions of the Russian Federation, the practice of corporate volunteering is not always determined and identified even by those who are responsible for the implementation of the social mission, corporate policy, and CSR projects or work with personnel in their organization. Here are some quotations from the interviews as evidence to our findings:

“I have never even thought about it, I had no idea that there was corporate volunteering until I read your question. I did not think that what we do can be called so”. (Head of HR department of a large factory)

“We are constantly involved in such projects. In principle, this is the daily life of our city, in which we are somehow included, just this activity is never called volunteering. Probably, I did not single them out at once”. (Director for the development of industrial holding)

Corporate volunteering is closely intertwined in the social and public activities that are systematically implemented and are implemented by employees of large enterprises in their territory. The phrase “We have always had it, we just never called it like that before” is typical and indicative. In different variations, it occurs in the texts of interviews of most of our experts.

This direction has traditionally developed in organizations since Soviet times and it has been institutionalized. It means that it is anchored in the functionality of certain employees, organizational structures, planned events, and technologies.

Experts who are directly involved in these projects cannot distinguish between the collection of donations and labor participation, participation in mass social and cultural events of a city, and assistance in their organization. The expert poll showed that this problem is typical for those enterprises that have and implement CSR programs and for those who spontaneously engage in social support for local communities. Here are a few examples from the interviews:

“Here the word volunteering simply means disinterested help¼. It was such that they simply collected items of necessity for fire victims, boarding schools. We break flower gardens near our enterprises. We leave on the day of the city for a procession, we arrange a holiday¼”. (Head of the corporate policy department of the enterprise)

“To be honest, I do not really understand the specifics myself. Volunteering is participation in all kinds of events and so on. With us corporate volunteering means education of youth. We organize a competition, organize a concert, arrange sports competitions in the park, promote everything we have in the country, pay tribute to the veterans of labour and the Second World War”. (Deputy director of the plant for social issues)

The experts recognized the educational value of the survey, which made them reflect on organizational practices and evaluate their managerial style in dealing with matters outside the production tasks.



## DISCUSSION

The research allowed the identification of the socio-demographic feature of the inhabitants of a large industrial region, who are engaged in corporate volunteering activities and programs. Our research shows that features pertaining to corporate volunteerism are shared mainly by employees who believe in civic engagement. Even though researchers rarely investigate the specifics of corporate volunteering as a distinctive social behavior, our findings show that it is more typical for women and for people with higher education. While the influence of the level of education on volunteering is recognized (Rodell et al., 2016), opinions regarding the evidence of volunteering intensity by gender are mixed, although research tends to show that women are more likely to volunteer than men in many countries (Lee & Brudney, 2012).

Next, we were interested in the social value of volunteering for those who are engaged in such activities, on an individual level. Mainly, we investigated the motivations animating corporate volunteers. Literature shows that volunteering serves certain functions for individuals (Rodell et al., 2016) and that the motivations for action are very different (Peggy & Hewitt, 2001; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998; Runte & Basil, 2011). The complex motivational mechanism in the case study we present here as a result of our research excludes self-oriented and self-help motives. It places high motives such as gaining social contacts and altruistic (idealistic) motives. The item “communication with interesting people” points to the value inhabitants of a large area attribute to social relations and networking, while the item “the opportunity to improve life in your city, district, street” mirrors the motivation of volunteers to contribute to the well-being of local communities.

The value of corporate volunteering for local communities was evaluated through the content of corporate volunteering and the conditions for the organization of such activities, which ensure the contribution of corporate volunteers to the well-being of local communities. From 15 practices which reflected different types of social engagement or prosocial behavior, the respondents found only those practices that are linked to event or ecologist volunteering as relevant. The experience of corporate volunteerism does not include assistance in emergency situations and the search for missing people, participation in the activities of NGOs and social institutions of the city, online volunteering, and so on.

The research shows that corporate volunteering develops in industrial regions of Russia due to the close interaction of enterprises and local self-government bodies, while NGOs are ignored. By contrast, in many developed or emerging countries, corporations are involved in encouraging public volunteering through funding and creating coalitions with NGOs (Shachar et al., 2019). In Sverdlovsk region, the traditional forms of implementing corporate volunteering are manifest as mass engagement of workers in short-term charitable activities, in organizing and conducting cultural events of importance for the local community, as well as urban clean-ups and landscaping. Local administration largely relies on the financial and volunteer support of major enterprises in planning community-oriented programs. An important feature is the fact that the managerial staff of the corporation is the driving force for mobilizing employees to be involved in corporate social projects and activities relevant for local communities.

The management of corporate volunteering in Russia is still in an infancy stage, by comparison to Western democracies. It is directed mainly toward urban environments and for local projects. Worldwide, CSR is on an upward slope due to the involvement of an increasing number of companies, which gradually leads to increasing corporate volunteer initiatives. This category includes large nationwide coverage companies as well as corporations which borrow CSR policies from parent companies or identify volunteering opportunities for their employees and allocate resources for this purpose (Păceșilă, 2017). In many Russian regions, such processes are not encountered, despite the incentives for corporate volunteering. It can be expected that the trend in Russian post-Soviet regions will align to the world practices, since there is evidence that corporate volunteering is gaining momentum in many countries, despite differences in economic–political organization. For instance, in communist China, the support structure is emerging through organizations such as the Horizon Corporate Volunteer Consultancy (HCVC). The HCVC designs corporate volunteering programs, creates online systems to recruit, manage, and evaluate volunteers, organizes national competitions to promote innovative volunteering projects across China, and so on (Grandi et al., 2018).

Our research highlights that in the organizational setting, the political and market interests of a company influence the amplitude of corporate volunteering. Further research would analyze the link between planning corporate volunteering activities and the interests, needs, and aspirations of local communities, in a process of hybridization (Shachar et al., 2019). We share the belief that a stronger connection between the planning of corporate volunteering and local priorities of public policies developed by local authorities can expand the resources of volunteering and increase the efficiency of volunteer activities.

## CONCLUSION

We achieved the main goal of our research, in revealing the specific features of corporate volunteering in a large Russian region, typical for territories in the post-Soviet countries. The study shows that we can connect volunteerism and the social well-being of people by analyzing the perceptions of the region's inhabitants on volunteering, the motivations, and practices of "prosocial behavior" that animate the volunteers themselves. The social value of corporate volunteering for the local community was evaluated through the social projects and programs, initiated or supported by companies in the large Russian region. Research shows that there is a lagging behind in the management of corporate volunteering in Russia, by comparison to the practices in developed market economy countries. A possible explanation resides in the inherited behavior of industrial enterprises in Russia, which organize employees as volunteers by partnering with local authorities, but ignore the possible synergy with NGOs. Such an approach facilitates implementation of the social mission of regional enterprises, successfully operating in market conditions and ensuring the quality of life on the territory where these enterprises are based. However, the spirit of corporate volunteering is partially lost in the process, and this is evident from the fact that the meaning of CSR eludes a large part of CEOs, polled in the study.

Data obtained from our research go beyond the study of corporate volunteering at individual and company levels, and reveal the image of the organizational level, where we can evaluate the traditions, norms, and practices that shape the culture of the organization and impact public policies. We share the belief that the planning of corporate volunteering in companies and local priorities of public policies developed by local authorities can expand the resources of volunteering and increase the efficiency of volunteer activities in the territory. Local authorities and the organizers of corporate volunteer activities in companies can and should explore the data and the findings of this study, reflect more on the meaning and scope of volunteerism, and develop managerial strategies to enhance the impact of volunteerism in building organizational culture, employee retention, and strategic partnerships in the communities of their residence. The scientific community can use our findings to broaden the understanding of managerial processes and corporate culture in post-Soviet territories and compare the practices in corporate volunteerism in different regions of the globe.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was supported by the grant of the Russian Foundation for Basic Research No. 16-03-00016-OFH "Russian volunteering dynamics: developing types of activity, challenges and management opportunities".

## REFERENCES

- Allen, K. (2012). The Big Tent: Corporate Volunteering in the Global Age, Spain: Ariel and Fundación Telefónica. Retrieved March 29, 2018 from: <https://en.fundaciontelefonica.com/publications/publication-details/itempubli/158/>
- Appau, S., Churchill S. (2018). Charity, Volunteering Type and Subjective Wellbeing. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 7, 1-15. DOI: 10.1007/s11266-018-0009-8.
- Brockner, J., Senior, D., Welch, W. (2014). Corporate volunteerism, the experience of self-integrity, and organizational commitment: Evidence from the field. *Social Justice Research*, 27, 1-23.
- CECP, in association with The Conference Board. Giving in Numbers. (2017). Edition. Retrieved October 16, 2019 from: [cecp.co/home/resources/or-conference-board.org/publications](http://cecp.co/home/resources/or-conference-board.org/publications)
- Corporate volunteering in Russia: assessment of the status and recommendations for the development. Analytical report, (2016), Moscow. Retrieved January 26, 2018 from: <http://corpvunteers.ru/upload/iblock/495/4952a70e372f741fec033c9cb54a2d54.pdf>
- Boštjančič, E., Antolović S., Erčulj, V. (2018). Corporate Volunteering: Relationship to Job Resources and Work Engagement. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 2018; 9: 1884. Retrieved October 16, 2019 from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6180289/pdf/fpsyg-09-01884.pdf/>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *A Concise Introduction to Mixed Methods Research*, SAGE Publications.
- Doh J. P., Guay T.R. (2004). Globalization and Corporate Social Responsibility: How Non-Governmental Organizations Influence Labor

- and Environmental Codes of Conduct. In: Daniel S.J., Reitsperger W.D. (eds.) Management and International Review. *Journal of International Business*. Gabler Verlag, Wiesbaden. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-322-90997-8\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-322-90997-8_2)
- Danshina, V. V., Soloviyev V. V. (2015). Social responsibility of industrial enterprises in the USSR. *Vestnik of Astrakhan State Technical University. Series: Economics*, 3, 67-74.
- Einolf, C. (2018). Volunteers in Community Organizations, in Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organizations in the 21st Century, DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-77416-9\_14/
- Einolf, C. (2018a). Evidence-based volunteer management: a review of the literature. *Voluntary Sector Review*, 9, 153-176. DOI: /10.1332/204080518X15299334470348
- Erasmus, B., Morey, P. (2016). Faith-based volunteer motivation: Exploring the applicability of the Volunteer Functions Inventory to the motivations and satisfaction levels in an Australian faith-based organization. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 27(3), 60-1343.
- Federal state statistics service of the Sverdlovsk region. Распределение организаций по видам экономической деятельности (данные 01.01.2018), Retrieved January 26, 2017 from [http://sverdl.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat\\_ts/sverdl/ru/statistics/sverdlStat/accounting](http://sverdl.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_ts/sverdl/ru/statistics/sverdlStat/accounting)
- Gatignon-Turnau, A. L., Mignonac, K. (2015). (Mis)Using employee volunteering for public relations: implications for corporate volunteers' organizational commitment. *Journal of Business Research*, 68, 7–18.
- Grandi F., Lough B., Bannister T. (2018). Global Trends in volunteering infrastructure a background paper for the 2018 state of the world's volunteerism report: the thread that binds. United Nations Volunteers (UNV). 39 p.
- Ghose, T., Kassam, M. (2014). Motivations to Volunteer Among College Students in India. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 25-28.
- Gorlova, N. I. (2016). History and prospects of development of Russian corporate volunteering. *Journal Scientific Notes*, 4(40), 56-61.
- Haski-Leventhal, D., Roza, L., Meijs, L. P. M. (2017). Congruence in Corporate Social Responsibility: Connecting the Identity and Behavior of Employers and Employees. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 143(1), 35-51.
- Shachar, I.Y., Essen J., Hustinx, L. (2019). Opening Up the "Black Box" of "Volunteering": On Hybridization and Purification in Volunteering Research and Promotion. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 0, 1–20. DOI: 10.1080/10841806.2019.1621660
- Haski-Leventhal, D., Meijs, L.C.P.M., Hustinx, L. (2010). The Third-party Model: Enhancing Volunteering through Governments, Corporations and Educational Institutes. *Journal of Social Policy*, 39(1), 139-158. DOI: 10.1017/S0047279409990377
- Hustinx, L., Cnaan R.A., Handy F. (2010). Navigating Theories of Volunteering: A Hybrid Map for a Complex Phenomenon. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior*, 40, 410–34.
- Integrating volunteering in the next decade. (2013) Resolution adopted by the General Assembly UN on 20 December 2012 [on the report of the Third Committee (A/67/449 and Corr.1)] 67/138. Retrieved February 9, 2017 from: <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/67/138>.
- Khvorostianov, N., Remennick, L. (2017). Coercion, Good Will, or Self-Interest? Problems of Post-Communism. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 65(4), 284-295. DOI: 10.1080/10758216.2016.1276842.
- Krasnopolskaya, I., Roza, L., Meijs, L. (2015). The Relationship Between Corporate Volunteering and Employee Civic Engagement Outside the Workplace in Russia. *International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 27(2), 640-672. DOI: 10.1007/s11266-015-9599-6.
- Lee, Y.J., Brudney, J. L. (2012). Participation in formal and informal volunteering: Implications for volunteer recruitment. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, 23, 159-180.
- Leskova, I.V. (2017). Culture of Corporate Volunteering in Russian Organizations. *Social Policy and Sociology*, vol.16, 3(122), 129–136. DOI: 10.17922/2071-3665-2017-16-3-129-136.
- Licandro, O. (2017). The relationship between corporate volunteering and corporate social responsibility: Results of an empirical study. *Ekonomski Vjesnik / Econviews – Review of Contemporary Entrepreneurship, Business, and Economic Issues*, 30(1), 67-83.
- Lup, D., Booth, J. E. (2018). Work and Volunteering: Longitudinal Relationships between Work-Related Experiences and Volunteering Behaviour: Work and Volunteering. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, DOI: 10.1111/bjir.12421
- Mayer, J., Silva, S. C. (2017). Exploring the Whole Value of Corporate Volunteering. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, 67, 95-119. DOI: 10.9774/T&F.4700.2017.se.00007.
- Mersiyanova, I.V., Yakobson, L.I. (2007). Public activity of the population and perception of civil society development by citizens. Moscow, Publishing House. house of HSE, 220 p.
- Mirvis, P.H., Hurley S.T., MacArthur, A. (2014). Transforming executives into corporate diplomats: The power of global pro bono service. *Organizational Dynamics*, 43(3), 235-245.

- Musick, M., Wilson, J. (2008). *Volunteers: A social profile*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 680 p.
- Obrad. C., Gherheș, V. (2018). A Human Resources Perspective on Responsible Corporate Behavior. Case Study: The Multinational Companies in Western Romania. *Sustainability*, MDPI, 10(3), 1-15.
- Păceșilă M. (2017). Corporate Volunteering: Trends, Benefits and Challenges. Current Situation in Romania. *Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management*, 12(2), 19-29.
- Peggy, A., Hewitt, T.L. (2001). Volunteer Work and Well-Being. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 42, 115–131.
- Penner, L.A., Finkelstein, M.A. (1998). Dispositional and Structural Determinants of Volunteerism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(2), 525–37.
- Popov E., Omonov Z., Veretennikova A. (2016). Institutional supporting of social innovations, proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Management, Leadership and Governance, ICMLG 2016, 271-279.
- Pro bono: Russian practice and vector of development. Analytical report. (2017). Moscow. Retrieved May 20, 2018 from: <http://nko.economy.gov.ru/Files/NewsDocuments/35f8cde3-3dc7-4cac-968d-e7e94d354bbe.pdf>
- Rodell, J., Breitsohl, H., Schröder, M., Keating, D. (2016). Employee Volunteering: A Review and Framework for Future Research. *Journal of Management*, 42(1), 55–84.
- Roza, L., Shachar, I., Meijs, L., Hustinx L. (2017). The nonprofit case for corporate volunteering: a multi-level perspective. *The service industries Journal*, 37, 746–765.
- Runte, M., Basil, D. (2011). Personal and corporate volunteerism: employee motivations. *International Journal of Business Environment*, 4 (2), 133-145.
- Salamon, L.M., Haddock M.A., Sokolowski S.W. (2017). Closing the Gap? New Perspectives on Volunteering North and South. In: Butcher J., Einolf C.J. (eds.) *Perspectives on Volunteering*. Basel: Springer, 29–51.
- Sekar, S., Dyaram, L. (2017). What drives employees to participate in corporate volunteering programs? *Social Responsibility Journal*, 13 (4), 661-677. DOI: 10.1108/SRJ-06-2017-0097
- Smith, D.H., Stebbins, R.A., Grotz, Ju. (2016). *The Palgrave Handbook of Volunteering, Civic Participation, and Nonprofit Associations*, vol. 1, US: Palgrave Macmillan, 1144 p.
- Smith, D. H. (2014). The Current State of Civil Society and Volunteering in the World, the USA, and China. *China Nonprofit Review* (English edition), 6(1), 137–150.
- State of the World's Volunteerism Report. (2018) The thread that binds Volunteerism and community resilience. Retrieved from: <https://www.unv.org/sites/default/files/2018%20The%20thread%20that%20binds%20final.pdf>.
- Stumberger, N. & Pauly, J. A. (2018). Active, Reactive, and Proactive Approaches to Corporate Volunteering in Three Countries. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 4, DOI: 10.1177/2329488418777038.
- UN Volunteers. (2015). Volunteerism and the Global Goals. Retrieved July 26, 2018 from: <https://www.unv.org/volunteerism/volunteerism-and-global-goals>.
- Voicu, B., Voicu, M. (2009). Volunteers and Volunteering in Central and Eastern Europe. *Sociológia. Slovak Sociological Review*, 41 (6), 539–63.
- Waele, E. D. & Hustinx, L. (2018). Governing Through Volunteering: The Discursive Field of Government-Initiated Volunteering in the Form of Workfare Volunteering. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, DOI: 10.1177/0899764018783094.
- Wilson, J. (2012). Volunteerism Research: A Review Essay. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 41, 176–212.